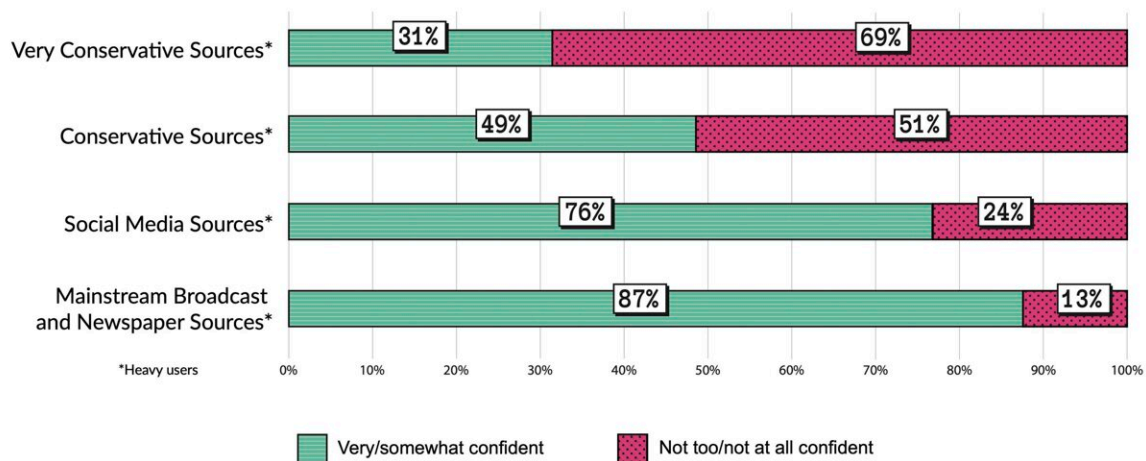


Heavy users of conservative media more willing to take ivermectin for COVID-19

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Confidence in Dr. Anthony Fauci providing trustworthy information about preventing and treating Covid-19 by reliance on media sources



Source: Annenberg Public Policy Center ASK survey, August 16 – September 5, 2021
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Confidence in Dr. Anthony Fauci providing trustworthy information about preventing and treating COVID-19—by reliance on different media sources. From Annenberg Science Knowledge survey, Aug. 16-Sept. 5, 2021. Credit: Annenberg Public Policy Center

Four in 10 Americans—and 7 in 10 heavy users of conservative media—say they would take ivermectin if they had been exposed to

someone who has Covid-19, according to a new survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) of the University of Pennsylvania.

Although ivermectin is approved for use to treat parasitic roundworm infections in humans, the Food and Drug Administration has not approved the use of this anti-parasitic drug to prevent or treat Covid-19, and studies of use of it for those purposes have been inconclusive. The FDA says current data "do not show ivermectin is effective against Covid-19" and using it for that purpose in humans or animals "can be highly dangerous."

"The finding that heavy consumers of conservative media are more likely to report a willingness to take ivermectin is consistent with our finding in the summer of 2020 that this audience was more likely to be willing to take hydroxychloroquine—which at the time was under study, and which the FDA later concluded was an ineffective treatment for hospitalized Covid patients, one whose risks outweigh its benefits," said APPC Director Kathleen Hall Jamieson.

The survey is the third wave of data from a nationally representative sample of U.S. adults that was empaneled in the spring of 2021. This wave of the survey, which was conducted in August and September among 1,669 respondents, finds that:

- Overall confidence that [health authorities](#) including Dr. Anthony Fauci are providing the public with trustworthy information about Covid-19 was largely unchanged from June to early September;
- Confidence in Fauci continues to be significantly lower among people who are heavier users of conservative media and very conservative media;
- Nearly 1 in 5 Americans (18%) say they are not likely to be

vaccinated and over half of them—10% of the total sample—say there is nothing that would change their mind;

- A quarter of respondents (25%) say they know someone, including themselves, who was fully vaccinated for Covid-19 and nonetheless tested positive for Covid-19 (a so-called breakthrough case); and
- Unvaccinated people are significantly more likely than vaccinated people to say they know a vaccinated person who experienced a breakthrough case of Covid-19.

"The evidence that those who are unvaccinated are more likely to report knowing a vaccinated person who experienced a breakthrough infection may indicate that the unvaccinated seek out evidence consistent with their vaccination hesitance or are more likely to live in under-vaccinated communities with higher ongoing spread of Covid-19—or both phenomena may be at work," Jamieson said. "The public health community needs to remind the public that vaccinated individuals who do get breakthrough infections are far less likely to need hospitalization or to die from Covid than are the unvaccinated." (See additional details near end of release.)

The latest Annenberg Science Knowledge (ASK) survey was conducted among 1,669 U.S. adult respondents from August 16-September 5, 2021. Data were weighted to represent the target U.S. adult population. The margin of error is ± 3.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The survey, conducted for the Annenberg Public Policy Center by SSRS, an independent research company, is a follow-up to June 2021 and April 2021 surveys fielded with the same respondents.

Confusion over ivermectin

Conservative media personalities have long promoted the use of the anti-parasitic drug ivermectin to prevent or treat Covid-19. For example, in a

show on March 8, 2021, Fox News' Laura Ingraham said: "And we know that our FDA has in many ways failed us by not allowing for the use of ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine, both of which are used around the world to reduce Covid hospitalizations and deaths."

Multiple large studies are assessing the use of the drug but at this point it is unapproved for Covid-19 by the FDA, which warns that its use can be dangerous.

Just 1 in 10 Americans (10%) say the statement "ivermectin is an effective treatment for Covid-19" is true, compared with 27% who say it is false. A majority of Americans (63%) say they are not sure whether that statement is true or not.

But when asked how likely they would be to *take* ivermectin if they had been exposed to someone with Covid-19 and the drug were available, 40% of Americans said they were somewhat or very likely to do so.

Ivermectin and media exposure

The survey asked respondents to describe their media use on a six-point scale, from 0 (none) to 5 (a lot of information). Respondents who gave a 4 or 5 to a type of media use are referred to here as heavy or heavier users. Our analysis of respondents' self-reported media exposure found that among people who said they are heavier users of...

- **Very conservative** sources such as Newsmax, One America News (OAN), Gateway Pundit, Parler or Telegram: 75% said they were likely to take ivermectin;
- **Conservative media** sources such as Fox News, Mark Levin, or Breitbart: 70% said they were likely to take ivermectin;
- **Social media** sources such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter: 46% said they were likely to take ivermectin;

- **Mainstream print/broadcast** media sources such as ABC, NBC, and CBS News, the Associated Press, and the news pages of the New York Times or Wall Street Journal: 35% said they were likely to take ivermectin.

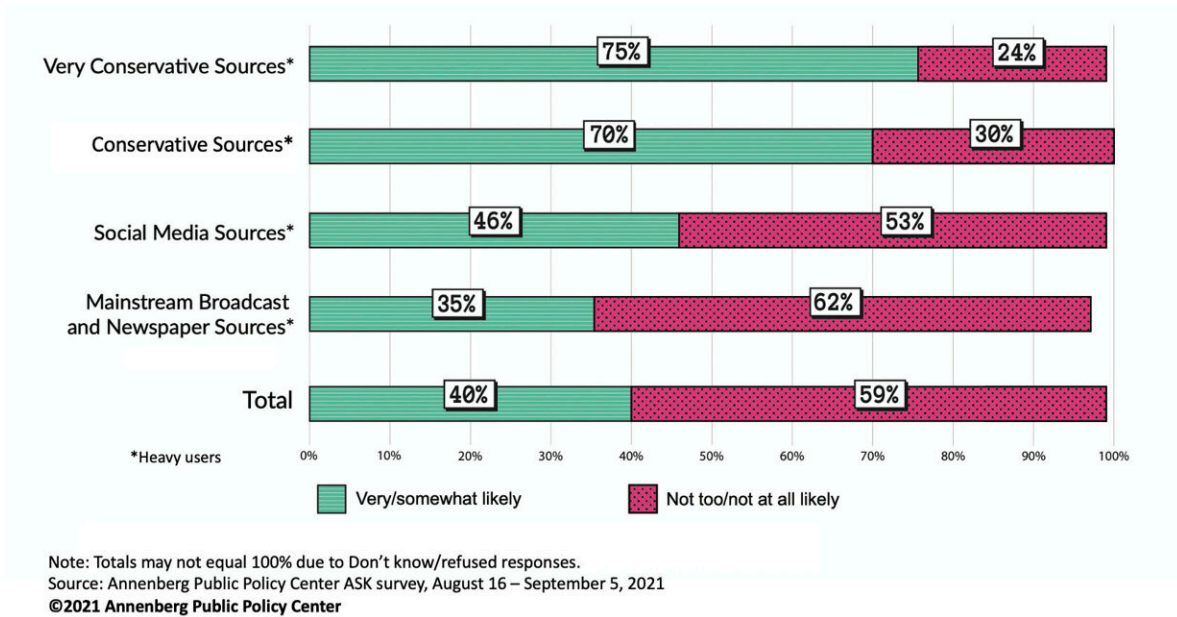
Confidence in U.S. health authorities

As in the June survey, the current ASK survey found that the most trusted source of information for treating and preventing Covid-19 is an individual's primary health care provider:

- **Primary health care provider:** 87% are confident their primary health care provider is offering trustworthy information about treating and preventing Covid-19—up significantly from 83% in June.
- **Food and Drug Administration:** 76% are confident that the FDA, which authorized emergency use of the Covid-19 vaccines available in the United States, is providing trustworthy information about Covid-19—statistically the same as in the prior surveys, in April and June.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** 75% are confident the CDC is providing trustworthy information on Covid-19, statistically unchanged in our surveys since August 2020;
- **Dr. Anthony Fauci:** 68% are confident that Fauci, director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, is providing trustworthy advice on Covid, statistically unchanged in our surveys since August 2020.

Lower confidence among conservative media users

If you knew that you had been exposed to someone with Covid-19, and the drug ivermectin were available to you, how likely would you be to take it?



Willingness to use ivermectin to prevent or treat COVID-19—by reliance on different media sources for information. From Annenberg Science Knowledge survey, Aug. 16-Sept. 5, 2021. Credit: Annenberg Public Policy Center

While confidence in the CDC, FDA, and Fauci remains high overall, it is substantially lower for all three among people who are heavier users of very conservative sources, and lower for the CDC and Fauci among those who are heavier users of conservative media sources. Among the heavier users of:

- **Very conservative media:** 31% express confidence in Fauci, 59% in the CDC, 51% in the FDA, and 86% in their primary health care provider;
- **Conservative media:** 49% express confidence in Fauci, 60% in the CDC, 68% in the FDA, and 90% in their primary health care

- provider;
- **Social media:** 76% express confidence in Fauci, 83% in the CDC, 80% in the FDA, and 94% in their primary health care provider;
 - **Mainstream print/broadcast users:** 87% express confidence in Fauci, 90% in the CDC, 90% in the FDA, and 96% in their primary health care providers.

The data are consistent with those in June. The only statistically significant change was seen in social [media](#) users' 94% confidence in primary health care providers, up from 83% in June.

Vaccines and prevention

The ASK survey found that 75% of respondents reported receiving a Covid-19 vaccine, up from 70% in June and 47% in April, when the same group was surveyed. Of the current sample's vaccinated respondents, 52% said they got Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine, 40% got Moderna's, and 6% got Johnson and Johnson's.

Of the total respondents, 49% reported discussing Covid-19 vaccination with a health care provider and 51% did not. Speaking with a health care provider about the vaccine was not significantly associated with the decision to be vaccinated or not, an analysis found.

- Of those who spoke with a health care provider, 83% said the provider was an M.D./medical doctor, 3% said it was an osteopath/D.O., and 1% said it was a chiropractor.
- Asked whether that health care provider was supportive of or opposed to the Covid-19 vaccine, 85% said the provider was supportive, 4% said the provider was opposed, and 11% said they were not sure.

Nearly half of those surveyed (47%) said they knew someone who died from Covid-19.

As mentioned above, a quarter of those surveyed (25%) said they know a vaccinated person (including themselves) who had a breakthrough case of Covid.

- Almost 1 in 4 of those (23%) who are vaccinated reported knowing a vaccinated person who had a breakthrough case of Covid—but almost 1 in 3 of those (31%) who are [unvaccinated people](#) reported knowing someone with a breakthrough case, a statistically significant difference.

The survey respondents who knew someone with a breakthrough case were asked about the severity of those people's symptoms. The respondents said 57% of the people who tested positive for Covid-19 despite being vaccinated had moderate or severe symptoms and 43% had no or mild symptoms.

Not vaccinated and not likely to be

Among the total sample, 1 in 4 (25%) Americans said they have not been vaccinated against Covid-19, compared with 30% in June.

Among this still-unvaccinated group, 79% said they have the information they need to decide whether to get vaccinated, but 21% say they still do not have the information they need.

Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) people in the still-unvaccinated group said they were not likely to be vaccinated. When this group was asked, "Is there anything that could change your mind and convince you to get vaccinated, or not, or are you unsure," over half of the group—or 10% of the total respondents—said there was nothing that would change their

mind.

The top reasons selected by the group who say they are unlikely to be vaccinated:

- 61% - It's still too untested/I'm waiting to see what happens (*up significantly from 48% in April)
- 53% - I don't trust the government (*up significantly from 40% in April)
- 51% - I don't trust the scientists and companies that make the vaccine (*up significantly from 36% in June and 30% in April)
- 49% - I'm worried about allergies and side effects (*up significantly from 35% in April)
- 28% - I'm just not concerned about coronavirus/Covid-19
- 26% - I never get vaccines, generally
- 15% - I had coronavirus/Covid-19, so I think I'm immune (*up significantly from 7% in June and April)

The total exceeds 100% because people were allowed more than one response.

More information: ASK Survey: [www.annenbergpublicpolicycente...
e-communication/ask/](http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/e-communication/ask/)

Provided by Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania

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